

Christuan, victoria

From: Wilkens, Richard H
Sent: Thursday, December 14, 2006 4:58 PM
To: Hines, Robert; Moskowitz, Brian; Slonac, Brian G; Battistelli, Michele T
Subject: another Butler county story
Importance: High

Butler County Sheriff Gets Immigration Enforcement Powers

POSTED: 11:54 am EST December 13, 2006
UPDATED: 5:02 pm EST December 13, 2006

[Email This Story](#) | [Print This Story](#)

[Sign Up for Breaking News Alerts](#)

Enter E-mail

HAMILTON — A local sheriff known for his activism against illegal immigrants said his office has been approved for a federal program that provides local authorities some immigration enforcement powers. Butler County Sheriff Richard Jones said his agency likely will be the first in the Midwest in the partnership program, which would allow deputies to detain illegal immigrants they encounter through arrests for other crimes or investigation.

"I will be able to enforce federal immigration law. If you trespass into community or this country and you're in this county, the local sheriff will be able to enforce these immigration laws," he said. "We can't get it soon enough."

Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney on Wednesday signed an agreement with federal authorities to give state police there immigration powers. State and county agencies in Alabama, Arizona, California, Florida and North Carolina already participate in the program, established by a 1996 law.

Local authorities must complete federal training and sign an operating agreement for federal supervision before they can detain illegal immigrants. Agencies in the program also get help from federal databases in identifying suspected illegal immigrants.

A spokesman for the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement said it doesn't discuss applicants until training is completed and an agreement is signed. He said some 30 applications are pending, and hundreds more agencies have asked about applying.

"It's a program that's growing in popularity among police agencies," spokesman Michael Gilhooly said in Washington. "It's a force multiplier for us and a good partnership for the community."

The Allen County, Ohio, sheriff's office is among agencies still seeking approval.

Jones was criticized by immigrants' rights and civil rights groups this spring after deputies detained 18 undocumented immigrants. They were released the same day.

He also has raised eyebrows by billing the federal government for housing inmates suspected of being illegal, for a billboard campaign warning employers against hiring illegal immigrants and a